

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

The listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently amended) An asset management and communication system for a healthcare facility, including:

- a server coupled to a database;

- a plurality of tags coupled to a corresponding plurality of assets, each tag being configured to transmit a tag ID that is uniquely associated in the database with asset data describing the corresponding asset;

- a first network coupled to the server including a plurality of first transceivers configured to receive the tag IDs and transmit the tag IDs and a transceiver ID to the server via the first network, whereby, in response to receipt of a tag ID and a transceiver ID from a transceiver, the server is configured to update the database with location information for the asset corresponding to the tag ID to indicate that the corresponding asset is adjacent the transceiver;

- a second network coupled to the server including a plurality of access points; and

- a plurality of portable client devices, each client device including a display and a transceiver configured to wirelessly transmit to the server via one of the plurality of access points a client device ID that is uniquely associated in the database with a user of the client device, whereby, in response to receipt of the client device ID, the server is configured to update the database with location information for the user to indicate that the user is within a reception range of the one access point, wherein each portable client device of the plurality of portable client devices is capable of being used to establish voice communications with each of the other portable client devices, wherein each of the portable client devices has a reader configured to read data directly from each of the plurality of tags, wherein each of the portable client devices is configured to control equipment associated with a patient room, and wherein each of the portable client devices are capable of being used to access information that relates to patients and that is stored on the server.

2. (Original) The system of claim 1, further including an external network coupled to the server.

3. (Original) The system of claim 2, wherein the external network is the internet.
4. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the database is a distributed database having portions of data stored at a plurality of different physical locations.
5. (Original) The system of claim 1, further including a plurality of routers connected to the second network and the server, the routers being configured to process communications between the second network and the server.
6. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the first plurality of transceivers are mounted at a corresponding plurality of fixed locations within the facility.
7. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of portable client devices is configured to write information for storage on the plurality of tags.
8. (Original) The system of claim 7, wherein each client device responds to information read from a tag via the interface by obtaining from the server asset data associated with the tag.
9. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of client devices is a thin client device.
10. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of client devices is configured to communicate with other client devices within a range of the client device without accessing an access point.
11. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the client device transceivers are configured to transmit and receive text, audio, and video content.

12. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein each of the client devices includes a cellular telephone.

13. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein each of the client devices includes one of the plurality of tags.

14. (Original) The system of claim 1, further including a plurality of workstations coupled to the first network.

15. (Original) The system of claim 14, wherein one of the workstations includes an interface configured to read information from and write information to any of the plurality of tags.

16. (Original) The system of claim 14, wherein each of the workstations includes a local database including a portion of the data stored in the database coupled to the server.

17. (Original) The system of claim 1, further including a nurse call server coupled to the server, the nurse call server being configured to respond to input signals from an input device operated by a user by transmitting a request signal to the server, the server being configured to respond to the request signal by transmitting a signal to a particular client device.

18. (Original) The system of claim 1, further including a nurse call server coupled to the server, the nurse call server being configured to respond to input signals from an input device operated by a user by changing the status of an indicator.

19. (Original) The system of claim 1, further including a monitoring server coupled to the server, the monitoring server being configured to receive output data generated by a piece of equipment and to transmit the output data to the server.

20. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein each of the client devices includes software configured to generate a plurality of screens on the display.

21. (Original) The system of claim 20, wherein the display is a touch sensitive display.

22. (Original) The system of claim 20, wherein the plurality of screens includes a log on screen having icons for facilitating access to the second network.

23. (Original) The system of claim 20, wherein the plurality of screens includes a users screen including a list of users authorized to access the second network.

24. (Original) The system of claim 20, wherein one of the plurality of screens includes a call person button, activation of which causes the client device to send a signal to a specified other client device to establish a communications link between the client device and the specified other client device.

25. (Original) The system of claim 20, wherein the plurality of screens includes a message screen having a record message button, activation of which causes the client device to record input signals from a microphone coupled to the client device.

26. (Original) The system of claim 25, wherein the message screen further includes a send message button, activation of which causes the client device to transmit a signal corresponding to the recorded input signals to a specified other client device.

27. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the asset data includes historical data describing past locations of the corresponding asset.

28. (Original) The system of claim 27, wherein the server is configured to automatically perform a plurality of operations based upon a plurality of predefined rules.

29. (Original) The system of claim 28, wherein one of the operations is updating the status of an asset based upon a current location of the asset and a past location of the asset.

30. (Original) The system of claim 28, wherein one of the operations is transmitting a signal to a particular client device based upon a current location of the asset and a past location of the asset.

31. (Original) The system of claim 28, wherein the asset data includes an access level associated with an asset, the server performing one of the plurality of operations based upon a rule including a determination of the access level of the asset.

32. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein each of the client devices is configured to access the database to determine the location and status of an asset having asset data stored in the database.

33. (Original) The system of claim 32, wherein the database further includes a file linked to the asset data of the asset, the file including additional information about the asset.

34. (Original) The system of claim 32, wherein each of the client device displays is configured to generate an asset request button, activation of which causes the client device to transmit a request signal to the server, the server responding to the request signal by transmitting a notification to a person responsible for delivering requested assets.

35. (Original) The system of claim 34, wherein the each of the client device displays is further configured to receive a user-selected designation of an urgency level of a request.

36. – 97. (Canceled)

98. (Currently amended) An asset management and communications system for a healthcare facility, including: a server coupled to a database;

a plurality of tags associated with a corresponding plurality of assets, each tag having a unique ID;

a plurality of sensors, each sensor configured to read the tag IDs of tags adjacent the sensor and to transmit a signal to the server indicating that the tags are adjacent the sensor, thereby permitting the server to update the database with location information indicating that the tags are adjacent a known location of the sensor; and

a plurality of portable client devices coupled to the server via access points positioned at known locations within the facility, each client device including a transceiver configured to transmit a unique ID signal to the server via an access point, thereby permitting the server to update the database with location information indicating that the client device is within a reception range of the access point;

the client device transceivers being further configured to access the tag location information in the database, wherein each portable client device of the plurality of portable client devices is capable of being used to establish voice communications with each of the other portable client devices, wherein each of the portable client devices has a reader configured to read data directly from each of the plurality of tags, wherein each of the portable client devices is configured to control equipment associated with a patient room, and wherein each of the portable client devices are capable of being used to access information that relates to patients and that is stored on the server.

99. (Canceled)